FORMER BORDER INSPECTOR SENTENCED TO 9 YEARS IN PRISON FOR CONSPIRACY, BRIBERY, MONEY LAUNDERING AND TAX FRAUD

PHOENIX - Former border inspector Michael Craig Anderson, 42, of Yuma, Ariz., was sentenced Wednesday afternoon in Federal District Court following a guilty plea to charges of conspiracy to import marijuana, bribery, money laundering and filing a false tax return. Judge David C. Campbell sentenced Anderson to nine years in prison.

Anderson was an INS Inspector at the San Luis Port of Entry from 1996 until 2001. During 2000 and 2001, Anderson accepted bribes from drug traffickers approximating $200,000 in exchange for allowing vehicles loaded with marijuana to pass through his lane without inspection at the port of entry. More than 1,000 kilograms of marijuana was trafficked into the United States as a result of Anderson's activities.

U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona Paul K. Charlton said, "Corrupt conduct by public officials undermines confidence in our government and compromises the security of our borders. We will continue to work to remove these corrupt officials in the same way a surgeon cuts out a cancer."

John E. Lewis, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI, Phoenix Division, advised "This judgment recognizes the seriousness of Law Enforcement corruption and the general impact it has on all crime problems. The FBI, IRS and the U.S. Attorney's Office will continue to aggressively pursue such issues."

Anderson's wife, Gina Anderson, 37, also of Yuma, pleaded guilty on February 24, 2006 to filing a false tax return. Gina Anderson was also sentenced Wednesday to 3 years of probation and 150 hours of community service.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Internal Revenue Service and the FBI. The prosecution was handled by John Boyle and Mary Beth Pfister, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

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